

STATUS OF THE CLAIMS

1 - 32. Canceled.

33. (New) A method for removing a layer of an oil contaminant from the surface of an aqueous solution, comprising:

providing

a solution contaminated by coolant oil, wherein said solution has a surface, and a surface skimmer comprising a conduit connected to a tube having an inlet end having a top portion, said inlet end having an inlet opening therein, wherein said inlet opening is on said top portion of said inlet end of said tube so that said inlet end is partially closed; and

positioning said tube on said surface of said solution so that said inlet end is submerged in said solution and said inlet opening is approximately positioned at the surface of said solution; and,

applying negative pressure to said tube under conditions such that said coolant oil is removed from said surface of said solution into said tube then into said conduit.

34. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said conduit is fluidically connected to a collection vessel and coolant oil removed from said solution collects in said collection unit.

35. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said solution is an aqueous solution.

36. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said tube is manually moved across said surface of said solution.

37. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said coolant oil in said collection vessel is further separated.

38. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein said tube is substantially circular.

39. (New) The method of Claim 33, wherein inlet opening is substantially rectangular.

40. (New) A method for removing a layer of an oil contaminant from the surface of an aqueous solution, comprising:

providing

a solution contaminated by oil derived from washing parts following heat treatment, wherein said solution has a surface, and

a surface skimmer comprising a conduit connected to a tube having an inlet end having a top portion, said inlet end having an inlet opening therein, wherein said inlet opening is on said top portion of said inlet end of said tube so that said inlet end is partially closed; and

positioning said tube on said surface of said solution so that said inlet end is submerged in said solution and said inlet opening is approximately positioned at the surface of said solution; and,

applying negative pressure to said tube under conditions such that said coolant oil is removed from said surface of said solution into said tube then into said conduit.

41. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein said conduit is fluidically connected to a collection vessel and coolant oil removed from said solution collects in said collection unit.

42. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein said solution is an aqueous solution.

43. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein said tube is manually moved across said surface of said solution.

44. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein said coolant oil in said collection vessel is further separated.

45. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein said tube is substantially circular.

46. (New) The method of Claim 40, wherein inlet opening is substantially rectangular.